

How ex-militant leader Soboma was killed

ON a day he decided to take a leisurely stroll, he met his tragic end. That is the story of fiery ex-militant leader Soboma George, who was shot dead on Tuesday in Port Harcourt.

Following his killing, soldiers and riot policemen have been deployed in the Rivers State capital. Armoured Personnel Carriers have also been moved to the waterfront. Residents are gripped by fear of reprisal attacks by ex-militants loyal to the late George.

The Police and members of his family confirmed his death, thereby laying to rest all doubts about his fate.

George's loyalists and cult members in Rivers state and

From Bisi Olaniyi, Port Harcourt

other parts of the volatile Niger Delta are rumoured to be planning to overrun Port Harcourt.

Sources said the main targets of their expected attacks are Port Harcourt's waterfronts, where most of the repentant militants live.

George, who hailed from Buguma, headquarters of Asari-Toru Local Government Area, like the leader of the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Alhaji Mujahid Dokubo-Asari, had boiled groundnut as his last meal.

The ex-militant leader, who embraced the Federal Government's amnesty offer, was organising a football competition for youths in Old Port Harcourt Township, popularly called Town.

George, who reportedly complained of being feverish, wore a green and white track suit to take a stroll in the neighbourhood. With him was a female friend.

As he walked down Nembe Street, Borokiri in Town, with his friend and some of his "boys", he reportedly stopped over to buy boiled groundnut. Then, gunmen, driving a navy blue Kia Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) stopped on seeing him. They rained bullets on George, firing several shots into the air to scare away passersby.

The attackers shot George in the head and all parts of his body. They reportedly alighted from their vehicle and continued shooting at him.

The girl, who was with George, was hit by bullets. She died on the spot. The groundnut hawkers survived the stray bullets that hit her. She is at Teme Clinic, Mile One, Diobu in Port Harcourt. The body of the late George's friend's was deposited at the morgue of Braithwaite Memorial Hospital (BMH), near Government House, Port Harcourt.

George's mangled body, believed to have been carried towards Abuja Waterfront by his "boys", is in a morgue in Town.

George, who used to be under the leader of the Niger Delta Vigilante Movement, Ateke Tom, escaped from Port Harcourt Prisons, in the jail break of 2007. He remained un-arrested since then.

Dokubo-Asari, in a telephone interview, condemned George's killing. He urged fighters to allow peace to reign in Rivers State and other parts of the Niger Delta.

The NDPVF's leader said: "I feel so sad that this type of thing is happening at this time. We cannot afford to go through that path again. We thought we had resolved the problems. Those involved must stop forthwith or be ready to face the wrath of the law."

Commissioner of Police Suleiman Abba told reporters at the police headquarters in Port Harcourt that the shooting that led to the death of George, occurred around 7 pm on Tuesday on Nembe Street, Borokiri. Efforts to recover his body failed, he said.

He assured residents of safety of lives and property, but added that no arrest had been made.

n Lagos today

was why he had it.

Again in 2007, it was the decision of the state governors that Obasanjo's successor would come from among them that eventually threw up the late President Umaru Yar'Adua as the party's flag bearer with Jonathan as his running mate," he said.

He however added that the ultimate power resided with "our people who have elected us to serve them"

He explained that the southsouth governors had decided to support Jonathan's bid to retain the top job. He said there would be no going back on the decision and expressed optimism that the president would become victorious in a free and fair poll.